

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

A. Status of the Claims and Explanation of Amendments

Claims 1-21 are pending. Claim 14 is amended herein, claims 1-13 and 15-21 are cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter in claim 21. This claim was, however, objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. [01/15/08 Office Action at p. 4]. By this paper, claim 14 is amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 21 which is now canceled.

Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter regarded as the invention. Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 12-14 and 16-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2003/0225185 to Akers, Jr. et al. ("Akers"). Claims 1-17 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,064,151 to Berge et al. ("Berge"). These rejections are respectfully asserted to be moot in light of the cancellation of claims 1-13 and 15-21 and amendment of claim 21.

Nothing in this paper should be regarded in any way as admissions that the cited documents are, in fact, prior art. Likewise, Applicants have chosen not to swear behind Akers or Berge, cited by the office action, or to otherwise submit evidence to traverse the rejection at this time. Applicants, however, reserve the right, as provided by 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.131 and 1.132, to do so in the future as appropriate.

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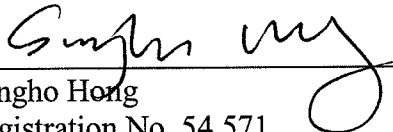
CONCLUSION

For the above-stated reasons, this application is respectfully asserted to be in condition for allowance. An early and favorable examination on the merits is requested. In the event that a telephone conference would facilitate the examination of this application in any way, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number provided.

THE COMMISSIONER IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE ANY ADDITIONAL FEES WHICH MAY BE REQUIRED FOR THE TIMELY CONSIDERATION OF THIS AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 AND 1.17, OR CREDIT ANY OVERPAYMENT TO DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 13-4500, ORDER NO. 1232-5560.

Respectfully submitted,
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